

**JOHNSON CITY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
January 14, 2014**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Cox, Secretary
John Hunter, Assistant Secretary
Dan Rutledge
Joe Wise, Vice-Chairman
Jenny Brock
Brenda Clarke

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kevin Cole, Chairman
Jim Woods
Jamie Povlich
Thomas Hord

STAFF PRESENT: Angie Carrier, Director of Development Services Dept.
Steve Neilson, Development Coordinator
Angie Charles, Senior Planner
Jessica Harmon, Planner
Laura Edmonds, Administrative Coordinator
Travis Olinger, W/S Engineering Service Coordinator
Allen Cantrell, City Engineer
Jim Epps, City Legal Council

Vice-Chairman Wise called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Rutledge gave the invocation, and Commissioner Cox led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting on December 10, 2013, were approved unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was to consider a request for minor amendments to the Subdivision Regulations. The majority of the amendments are housekeeping in nature and are intended to better clarify existing rules and procedures. Additional amendments were provided by the Water/Sewer Department as well.

Public Hearing was held and no one spoke.

**Motion: Brock
Second: Clarke**

**To recommend approval of minor amendments,
with additions from Water/Sewer, to the Subdi-
vision Regulations.**

The motion passed by a 6 – 0 vote.

The second item on the agenda was a request to consider Washington County Rezoning Request, for 322 Highridge Road, A-1 (General Agricultural District) to R-1 (Low Density Residential District). The petitioner proposes to subdivide the property into two lots.

Public Hearing was held and no one spoke.

Motion: Clarke

Second: Cox

To recommend approval of Washington County Rezoning Request, for 322 Highridge Road, A-1 to R-1.

The motion passed by a 6 – 0 vote.

The third item on the agenda was to consider Rezoning Request #978, for 500 W. Walnut Street (property also contains address 608 W. Walnut Street), an approximate 4.8- acre parcel, from B-2 (Central Business District) to B-3 (Supporting Central Business). The industrial buildings on the property requested for rezoning are currently vacant. The petitioner proposes to demolish the existing buildings and replace them with a 5-building, 216- unit apartment complex that includes a club house, pool, and playground facilities.

Commissioner Cox noted he would be abstaining from this discussion and vote to avoid a conflict of interest.

Public hearing was held.

Tom McKee, attorney representing petitioner, spoke for the rezoning request by stating that State of Franklin Road was built to attract development. Mr. McKee believes that B-3 is appropriate zoning for supporting Central Business.

Scott Austin, one of four owners of “Evolve Development”, spoke for the rezoning request by stating that North State of Franklin is a strong catalyst for urban growth. Mr. Austin wishes to revitalize the property while still trying to mimic the look of the late Mill.

Amber Lee, 723 W. Pine Street, represents the Southside Organization, spoke against the rezoning request, stating that three neighborhood meetings have been held regarding this rezoning and the main concerns were the lack of parking for this project along with the amount of traffic that this construction would generate. The Southside neighborhood supports commercial development but feels that this particular project is not appropriate for the surrounding area.

Jodi Jones, 315 W. Locust, President of Southside Neighborhood Association, spoke against the rezoning request. Mrs. Jones insists that the City should conduct a corridor study to see what the city actually wants and/or needs in regards to the development of this corridor.

Harold Hardy, 5 W. Maple Street, a former architect, spoke against the rezoning request by stating that this particular development would be considered “spot zoning”. Mr. Hardy agrees that the

City should conduct a corridor study to see what needs to be done in order to enhance the gap between ETSU, downtown, and the Tree Streets.

Lynne Hunter, 512 W. Maple Street, spoke against the rezoning request by supporting the need for a corridor study. Mrs. Hunter envisions the former Mill as a place of commerce, work, a landmark, and a keystone feature of Johnson City.

Kim Blevins, 422 W. Maple Street, spoke against the rezoning request by stating the existing zoning protects the nearby historic district and there should not be any mixing of commercial with historic.

Matt Herron, 806 N. Castle Street, spoke against the rezoning request by stating that this particular project seems like a good project but it is not appropriate in this area of Johnson City.

Richard Swearingen, 415 W. Maple Street, spoke against the rezoning request by agreeing that a corridor study is needed. He believes that downtown revitalization cannot be supported by young college students that are not financially stable.

Howell Sherrod Jr., 723 W. Locust Street, spoke against the rezoning request by agreeing that a corridor study should take place to ensure appropriate development for the City. Mr. Sherrod stated that the proposed parking spots do not match up to the amount of tenants that would be living in this development.

Andrea Lowry, 309 Poplar Street, spoke against the rezoning request by agreeing that a corridor study should take place to ensure appropriate development of our downtown area. This particular development is not appropriate for the surrounding Johnson City area.

Linda Vett, 602 Hoover Street, spoke against the rezoning request by stating that the Tree Streets are considered a “walking community” and this development will take that away from the surrounding locations due to all the traffic and minimal amount of parking spaces.

Wes Nelson, 302 W. Pine Street, spoke against the rezoning request by stating that the City needs to take time to think about the impact this rezoning will have long-term in Johnson City. Mr. Nelson agrees that a corridor study is necessary.

Rachel Zonder, 513 W. Walnut, spoke against the rezoning request by stating that walking is a big deal for this particular area and this development would take that away from surrounding neighborhoods along with adding both traffic and safety concerns for its citizens. Mrs. Zonder feels that this rezoning would not be good planning.

Motion: Rutledge
Second: Clarke

**To recommend approval of Rezoning Request
#978, for 500 W. Walnut Street, from B-2 to B-3.**

The motion passed by a 5 – 0 - 1 (Cox) vote.

The last item on the agenda was to consider Rezoning Request #979, for property located at 6385 Bristol Hwy. and N. Pickens Bridge Rd. totaling approximately 7.43 acres from B-4 (Planned Arterial Business) and RP-3 (Planned Residential) to R-5 (High Density Residential). One of the properties, 365 N. Pickens Bridge Rd., has 42 multi-family units on it and the other property, 6835 Bristol Hwy., is vacant. The petitioner proposes to expand onto the vacant property by constructing an additional 53 multi-family units.

The petitioner requested that the item be withdrawn from the agenda. The commission unanimously decided to withdraw the item.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

APPROVED:

SIGNED:

Kevin Cole, Chairman

Greg Cox, Secretary